British Safety Council

Abrasive wheel safety: what should you check?

Quick workplace checklist

Use this quick checklist to sense-check whether abrasive wheels are being selected, maintained and used safely at work. It is a practical prompt, not a substitute for a full risk assessment, practical instruction or supervision.

1 Training and competence



- [ ] Are operators trained to use abrasive wheel equipment safely?
- [ ] Is training appropriate for the equipment, task and level of risk?
- [ ] Is practical instruction provided where workers mount or change wheels?
- [ ] Is refresher training given when equipment, risks or working practices change?

2 Wheel selection



- [ ] Is the wheel suitable for the machine, material and task?
- [ ] Is the wheel's specification and speed rating correct?
- [ ] Are compatible accessories and fittings being used?

3 Checks before use



- [ ] Is the wheel free from cracks, damage or deterioration?
- [ ] Has the wheel been stored and handled correctly?
- [ ] Are pre-use checks completed before work starts?

4 Machine condition and maintenance



- [ ] Is the grinder or machine in safe working condition?
- [ ] Are maintenance and repairs carried out by competent people?
- [ ] Are manufacturer instructions being followed?

5 Guards and safe operation



- [ ] Are suitable guards fitted and used?
- [ ] Are safe systems of work in place?
- [ ] Are bystanders protected from sparks, fragments and contact with the wheel?

6 Exposure controls



- [ ] Have dust, noise and vibration risks been assessed?
- [ ] Are appropriate controls in place to reduce exposure?
- [ ] Is suitable PPE provided and used where needed?

Common hazards to remember



Wheel breakage



Contact with moving wheel



Flying particles and sparks



Dust



Noise and vibration



Need abrasive wheel safety awareness training?

Explore British Safety Council's online 'Abrasive Wheel Safety' course.

View the course

Always follow manufacturer guidance and your organisation's safe system of work.